



State of Arizona

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 20, 2013

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Governor Jan Brewer: Arizona Wins National Award for Prescription Drug Initiative

PHOENIX – Governor Jan Brewer today celebrated the news that Arizona's *Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse Initiative* has been awarded the 2013 Western Region Outstanding Criminal Justice Program Award.

Each year, the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) recognizes five states whose criminal justice programs most effectively address crime-related issues within their communities. At its annual National Forum on Criminal Justice in August, the NCJA honored Arizona's prescription drug initiative as the best in the Western region in terms of innovation and delivery of concrete results.

"I am proud of the work Arizona has done to curb this silent but serious epidemic. The staggering consequences of prescription drug misuse and abuse – whether addiction, fatality, crime or rising health care costs – are devastating to Arizona families and communities," said Governor Brewer. "This award is a true testament to the good that can be done when state agencies, local communities and dedicated Arizonans partner for a common and worthy cause."

The *Arizona Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse Initiative* reflects a multi-systemic, multi-agency effort to reduce prescription drug misuse and its associated consequences. It was developed by the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission and the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families, with partnership from the Arizona Department of Health Services; Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area; Arizona State Board of Pharmacy; and DrugFreeAZ.

The program currently is being implemented in three pilot counties – Yavapai, Pinal and Graham/Greenlee. Each of these counties has successfully employed the initiative's five key efforts, including: 1) reducing illicit acquisition and diversion of prescription medications; 2) educating prescribers and pharmacists about best practices for controlled substances; 3) enhancing prescription drug practice and policies in law enforcement; 4) increasing public awareness about the risks of prescription drug misuse; and 5) building a resilience in children and adults.

Since June 2012, the initiative has been responsible for the collection of more than 5,000 pounds of unused prescriptions, including controlled substances; the education of nearly 9,000 Arizonans through research-based awareness curriculum and a total media reach of more than 395,000 people. Additionally, registration by pharmacists and doctors in the state's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) has increased 137% and 112%, respectively, across all three pilot counties.

For more information on Arizona's *Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse Initiative*, please contact George Diaz, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, at (602) 364-1156 or GDiaz@azcjc.gov.

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